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DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. This action is responsive to Amendment filed on May 15, 2009 where Applicant amended claims 1,36, and canceled claims 2-4,20,21,23,25-35,37-39,55,56,60-63. Claims 1,5-19,22,36,40-54,57 are pending.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Robert J Devoto (reg 55108) on 4/6/09.

The application has been amended as follows:

SEE ATTACHED LISTING OF CLAIMS

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 1,5-7,9,10,12-19,22,36,40-42,44,45,47-54,57 are allowed.
4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Applicants invention of audibly informing a recipient of an arrival of a digital communication from a sender, is found to be patentable. Prior art references found to be pertinent to Applicants disclosure, either only

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teach minor aspects of the invention or only teach the general environment of the invention. The collective prior art, either singly or in combination, do not teach the claim limitations.

The primary reason for allowance is where the sender designates the audio identifier to be rendered at the recipient, by accessing a data store located at a recipient computer system based on a user identifier of the sender. And wherein the rendering of the audio identifier also is conditioned on whether communication exchange preferences associated with the recipient and stored in the data store allow the recipient to perceive the audio identifier.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to RAMY M. OSMAN whose telephone number is (571)272-4008. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ario Etienne can be reached on (571) 272-4001. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Ramy M Osman/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2457

July 29, 2009

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for audibly informing a recipient of an arrival of a digital communication from a sender, the method comprising:

receiving a digital communication from a sender directed to a recipient;

determining whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier that identifies the sender of the digital communication and that is designated by the sender of the digital communication; and

conditioning rendering of the audio identifier for perception by the recipient on whether the digital communication is determined to be associated with the audio identifier, the audio identifier being rendered multiple times in repetition in response to receipt of the digital communication, each of the multiple renderings being prior to or concurrent with perception of the digital communication by the recipient,

wherein the sender comprises a caller and the digital communication comprises a phone call, [[and]]

wherein:

receiving a digital communication comprises receiving the phone call directed to the recipient;

determining whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier comprises determining whether the phone call is associated with an audio identifier that identifies the caller and that is designated by the caller; and

conditioning rendering of the audio identifier comprises conditioning rendering of the audio identifier on whether the phone call is determined to be associated with the audio identifier, the audio identifier being rendered multiple times in repetition so as to be made perceivable as a ring tone for the phone call,

wherein determining whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier comprises accessing a data store located at a recipient computer system based on a user identifier of the sender, and

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wherein the rendering of the audio identifier also is conditioned on whether communication exchange preferences associated with the recipient and stored in the data store allow the recipient to perceive the audio identifier.

2-4. (Cancelled)

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the audio identifier is a spoken version of a user identifier of the sender.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier comprises determining whether an audio identifier has been received from the sender.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein determining whether an audio identifier has been received from the sender includes determining whether the audio identifier has been received with the digital communication.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[8]], wherein the user identifier of the sender is included in the digital communication.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[8]], wherein the user identifier is an e-mail address, an instant messaging handle, or a screen name.

11. (Canceled)

12.(Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[11]], wherein the rendering of the audio identifier is allowed when the communication exchange preferences explicitly include a setting indicating that the recipient is allowed to perceive the audio identifier.

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13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the setting is set by the recipient in response to a query.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[11]], wherein the rendering of the audio identifier is not allowed when the communication exchange preferences explicitly include a setting indicating that the recipient is not allowed to perceive the audio identifier.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the setting is set by the recipient in response to a query.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[11]], wherein the rendering of the audio identifier or a rendering of the digital communication is not allowed when the communication exchange preferences explicitly include a setting indicating that the recipient is not allowed to perceive the audio identifier or the digital communication.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the setting is set by the recipient in response to a query.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling the recipient to perceive a user interface and rendering the audio identifier if the recipient selects a user interface element that corresponds to authorization of the audio identifier.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the rendering of the audio identifier also is conditioned on whether the recipient is available to receive the digital communication.

20. (Cancelled) .

21. (Cancelled)

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22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising rendering for perception by the recipient a sender profile.

23-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Currently Amended) A computer system for audibly informing a recipient of an arrival of a digital communication from a sender, the computer system comprising:

- a data store configured to store audio identifiers; and

- a digital communication processor configured to:

- receive a digital communication from a sender directed to a recipient,

- determine whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier that identifies the sender of the digital communication and that is designated by the sender of the digital communication,

- access the audio identifier from the data store and condition rendering of the audio identifier for perception by the recipient on whether the digital communication is determined to be associated with the audio identifier, the audio identifier being rendered multiple times in repetition in response to receipt of the digital communication, each of the multiple renderings being prior to or concurrent with perception of the digital communication by the recipient,

- wherein the sender comprises a caller and the digital communication comprises a phone call, and

- wherein the digital communication processor is configured to:

- receive a digital communication by receiving the phone call directed to the recipient;

- determine whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier by determining whether the phone call is associated with an audio identifier that identifies the caller and that is designated by the caller; and

- condition rendering of the audio identifier by conditioning rendering of the audio identifier on whether the phone call is determined to be associated with the audio identifier, the audio identifier being rendered multiple times in repetition so as to be made perceivable as a ring tone for the phone call,

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wherein the digital communication processor is configured to determine whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier by accessing a data store located at a recipient computer system based on a user identifier of the sender, and

wherein the digital communication processor also conditions the rendering of the audio identifier on whether communication exchange preferences associated with the recipient and stored in the data store located at the recipient computer system allow the recipient to perceive the audio identifier.

37-39. (Cancelled)

40. (Original) The computer system of claim 36, wherein the audio identifier is a spoken version of a user identifier of the sender.

41. (Original) The computer system of claim 36, wherein the digital communication processor is configured to determine whether the digital communication is associated with an audio identifier by determining whether an audio identifier has been received from the sender.

42. (Original) The computer system of claim 41, wherein the digital communication processor is configured to determine whether an audio identifier has been received from the sender by determining whether the audio identifier has been received with the digital communication.

43. (Canceled)

44. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 36[[43]], wherein the user identifier of the sender is included in the digital communication.

45. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 36[[43]], wherein the user identifier is an e-mail address, an instant messaging handle, or a screen name.

46. (Canceled)

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47. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 36[[46]], wherein the digital communication processor is configured to allow the rendering of the audio identifier when the communication exchange preferences explicitly include a setting indicating that the recipient is allowed to perceive the audio identifier.

48. (Original) The computer system of claim 47, wherein the setting is set by the recipient in response to a query.

49. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 36[[46]], wherein the digital communication processor is configured to not allow the rendering of the audio identifier when the communication exchange preferences explicitly include a setting indicating that the recipient is not allowed to perceive the audio identifier.

50. (Original) The computer system of claim 49, wherein the setting is set by the recipient in response to a query.

51. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 36[[46]], wherein the digital communication processor is configured to not render the audio identifier or the digital communication when the communication exchange preferences explicitly include a setting indicating that the recipient is not allowed to perceive the audio identifier or the digital communication.

52. (Original) The computer system of claim 51, wherein the setting is set by the recipient in response to a query.

53. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 36, wherein the digital communication processor is further configured to enable the recipient to perceive a user interface and render the audio identifier if the recipient selects a user interface element that corresponds to authorization of the audio identifier.

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54. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 36, wherein the digital communication processor is also configured to condition rendering of the audio identifier on whether the recipient is available to receive the digital communication.

55. (Cancelled)

56. (Cancelled)

57. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 36, wherein the digital communication processor is further configured to render for perception by the recipient a sender profile.

58-63. (Cancelled)